

Amendments to the Claims:

The following listing of claims replaces all prior versions of the claims:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Original) A covering system comprising:
 - a first membrane;
 - a first flotation member coupled to the first membrane, wherein the first flotation member includes a first float and a first float compartment membrane, and wherein the first float compartment membrane is coupled to the first membrane; and
 - a first plurality of gas-relief passageways positioned either:
 - within the first float compartment membrane, or
 - within the first membrane and adjacent to the first flotation member;

wherein at least one of the gas-relief passageways within the first plurality is structured so that gas flows unobstructed through it when the system is used.
2. (Original) The covering system of claim 1, wherein the first float is sealed in the first float compartment membrane.
- 3-4. (Canceled)
5. (Original) The covering system of claim 1, wherein the first float compartment membrane is coupled to either an upper surface or a lower surface of the first membrane, and wherein the first float is positioned between the first membrane and the first float compartment membrane.

6. (Original) The covering system of claim 1, wherein the first flotation member is coupled to the first membrane so as to elevate the first plurality of gas-relief passageways above at least a portion of the first membrane when the system is used.

7-8. (Canceled)

9. (Original) The covering system of claim 1, further comprising:
a second flotation member coupled to the first membrane, wherein the second flotation member includes a second float and a second float compartment membrane, the second float compartment membrane is coupled to the first membrane, and the second flotation member is spaced apart from the first flotation member; and
a first elongated weight positioned on an upper surface of the first membrane and between the first and second flotation members.

10. (Original) The covering system of claim 9, further comprising:
a second elongated weight positioned on an upper surface of the first membrane at an angle to either the first flotation member, the second flotation member, or the first elongated weight.

11. (Original) The covering system of claim 1, further comprising:
an anchor system coupled to an edge of the first membrane, the anchor system comprising:

a weighted member extending along and coupled to at least a portion of the edge
of the first membrane.

12. (Original) The covering system of claim 11, wherein the anchor system further comprises
a connector coupled to the edge of the first membrane.

13. (Original) The covering system of claim 12, wherein the connector includes a sleeve.

14. (Original) The covering system of claim 1, further comprising:
a service opening positioned within the first membrane, the service opening being defined
by a service opening edge and being spaced apart from the first flotation member
and the first plurality of openings;
a second flotation member coupled to the first membrane so as to elevate the service
opening edge above a body containing some liquid when the system is used; and
a service opening membrane coupled to the service opening edge.

15. (Original) The covering system of claim 14, further comprising:
a service opening weight coupled to the service opening membrane and spaced apart from
the service opening edge.

16. (Twice amended) A covering system comprising:
a first membrane having a width;

a first float coupled to the first membrane, the first float having a width that is not more than twenty-five percent of the width of the first membrane; and

a second membrane coupled to the first membrane so as to define gas-relief openings between the first and second membranes;

wherein the covering system is configured such that when the covering system is placed over a body containing some liquid and used, gas from the body is directly vented to atmosphere through at least one of the gas-relief openings.

~~a second float coupled to the first membrane, the second float being spaced apart from the first float; and~~

~~a first elongated weight positioned on an upper surface of the first membrane and between the first and second floats.~~

17. (Original) The covering system of claim 16, wherein the first float is sealed in a first float compartment membrane, and wherein the first float compartment membrane is coupled to the first membrane.

18. (Original) The covering system of claim 16, wherein the first float is coupled to the first membrane with a first float compartment membrane, wherein the first float compartment membrane is coupled to either an upper surface or a lower surface of the first membrane, and wherein the first float is positioned between the first membrane and the first float compartment membrane.

19. (Canceled)

20. (Amended) The covering system of claim ~~33~~19, further comprising:
a second elongated weight positioned on an upper surface of the first membrane at an angle to either the first float, the second float, or the first elongated weight.
21. (Original) The covering system of claim 16, further comprising:
an anchor system coupled to an edge of the first membrane, the anchor system comprising:
a weighted member extending along and coupled to at least a portion of the edge of the first membrane.
22. (Original) The covering system of claim 21, wherein the anchor system further comprises a connector coupled to the edge of the first membrane.
23. (Original) The covering system of claim 22, wherein the connector includes a sleeve.
24. (Previously presented) The covering system of claim 16, further comprising:
a service opening positioned within the first membrane, the service opening being defined by a service opening edge and being spaced apart from the first float and the gas-relief openings;
a second flotation member coupled to the first membrane so as to elevate the service opening edge above a body containing some liquid when the system is used; and
a service opening membrane coupled to the service opening edge.

25. (Original) The covering system of claim 24, further comprising:
a service opening weight coupled to the service opening membrane and spaced apart from
the service opening edge.

26-27. (Canceled)

28. (Previously presented) A venting method comprising:
coupling a first membrane to a first flotation member, wherein the first flotation member
includes a first float and a first float compartment membrane, and wherein the
coupling includes coupling the first float compartment membrane to the first
membrane;
forming gas-relief passageways either:
within the first float compartment membrane, or
within the first membrane and adjacent to the first flotation member; and
elevating at least a portion of the first membrane:
so as to cause the first membrane to float when placed over a body containing
some liquid; and
so that gas from the body is directly vented to atmosphere through at least one of
the gas-relief passageways.

29. (Original) The venting method of claim 28, wherein the coupling includes welding the
first float compartment membrane to the first membrane.

30. (Previously presented) A venting method comprising:
- coupling a first membrane having a width to a first float having a width that is not more than twenty-five percent of the width of the first membrane;
- coupling a second membrane to the first membrane so as to define gas-relief openings between the first and second membranes;
- placing the coupled first and second membranes over a body containing some liquid; and
- elevating the gas-relief openings over the body so that gas from the body is directly vented to atmosphere through at least one of the gas-relief openings.
31. (Original) The venting method of claim 30, wherein the coupling the second membrane to the first membrane includes welding the second membrane to the first membrane.
32. (Previously presented) A method of venting gas from a body containing some liquid, comprising:
- placing a covering system over the body, the covering system comprising:
- a first membrane having an outer edge and a width;
- a first flotation member coupled to the first membrane, wherein the first flotation member includes a first float and a first float compartment membrane, the first float has a width that is not more than twenty-five percent of the width of the first membrane and a first float compartment membrane, and the first float compartment membrane is coupled to the first membrane;
- elevating portions of the first membrane above the body; and

positioning the covering system to allow gas from the body to vent directly to atmosphere around the outer edge of the first membrane.

33. (New) The covering system of claim 16, further comprising:

a second float coupled to the first membrane, the second float being spaced apart from the first float; and
a first elongated weight positioned on an upper surface of the first membrane and between the first and second floats.

34. (Original) A covering system comprising:

a first membrane having a top surface and an opposing bottom surface;
a first flotation member coupled to the first membrane, the first flotation member including a first float and a first float compartment membrane having an inside surface and an opposing outside surface, the first float compartment membrane being coupled to the first membrane; and
a first plurality of gas-relief passageways positioned either:
within the first float compartment membrane and extending between the inside and opposing outside surfaces, or
within the first membrane, extending between the top and opposing bottom surfaces, and adjacent to the first flotation member;
wherein at least one of the gas-relief passageways within the first plurality is structured so that gas flows unobstructed through it when the system is used.